

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 039627

47

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DRAFTED BY EA/PHL:BAFLECK:PAW

APPROVED BY EA:PCHABIB

EA:RHMILLER

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MANILA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 039627

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, RP

SUBJECT: VIEWS OF STEVE PSINAKIS

REF: MANILA 2128

1. STEVE PSINAKIS CALLED ON ASSISTANT SECRETARY HABIB FEBRUARY 17. REFERRING TO JANUARY 27 CONVERSATION, HE SAID COMMUNISTS WERE CONTINUING THEIR EFFORTS TO CAPTURE ANTI-MARTIAL LAW, ANTI-MARCOS MOVEMENTS IN UNITED STATES AND PHILIPPINES. THEIR INITIAL REACTION TO THE FORD VISIT TO MANILA HAD BEEN THAT IT WOULD THOROUGHLY DISCOURAGE THE NON-COMMUNIST ANTI-MARCOS FORCES BECAUSE IT INDICATED OFFICIAL UNITED STATES SUPPORT FOR MARCOS AND MARTIAL LAW. NOW THE COMMUNISTS BELIEVE THAT THE FACT THAT FORD WOULD VISIT THE PHILIPPINES DURING THE PRE-ELECTION PERIOD IN THE UNITED STATES WHEN HE HAD MORE IMPORTANT THINGS TO ATTEND TO INDICATES A USG RECOGNITION OF WEAKNESS IN THE PHILIPPINES AND THE NEED TO BOLSTER MARCOS. BUT THEY ALSO BELIEVE THAT VIET-NAM AND ANGOLA DEMONSTRATE THAT CONGRESS

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 STATE 039627

WOULD NOT SUPPORT ANY USG INTERVENTION IN THE PHILIPPINES

IN CASE OF DOMESTIC TURMOIL OR CIVIL WAR. THEREFORE, GROWING WEAKNESS OF THE MARCOS REGIME PLUS CONGRESSIONAL RESISTANCE TO GREATER U.S. INVOLVEMENT HAS LED COMMUNISTS TO REDOUBLE THEIR EFFORTS TO CAPTURE CONTROL OF ANTI-MARCOS FORCES WITH EVENTUAL OBJECTIVE OF TAKING CONTROL OF THE PHILIPPINES. HE BELIEVES THEY ARE MAKING PROGRESS.

2. PSINAKIS SAID HIS LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES ARE TO MAINTAIN THE U.S.-PHILIPPINE ALLIANCE, TO PROTECT U.S. MILITARY AND ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN THE PHILIPPINES, AND TO PROMOTE THE WELFARE OF THE PHILIPPINE PEOPLE AND NATION. HE BELIEVES HIS OBJECTIVES ARE IDENTICAL WITH THOSE OF PRESIDENT FORD AND U.S. GOVERNMENT. BUT HE ALSO BELIEVES THAT ACHIEVEMENT OF THOSE OBJECTIVES REQUIRE END OF MARTIAL LAW AND DEPARTURE OF MARCOS. THEREFORE, HE HAD COME TO HABIB TO SEEK ADVICE ON WHAT COULD BE DONE TO PREVENT THE COMMUNISTS FROM TAKING OVER THE ANTI-MARCOS MOVEMENT AND EVENTUALLY THE PHILIPPINES.

3. HABIB REPLIED THAT HE COULD GIVE NO ADVICE. HE WAS QUITE PREPARED TO MEET WITH PSINAKIS AND LISTEN TO HIS VIEWS BUT IT WOULD BE IMPROPER TO ENTER INTO ANY DIALOGUE. SO LONG AS HE BROKE NO U.S. LAW, PSINAKIS WAS FREE TO ENGAGE IN A POLITICAL STRUGGLE, AND TO SPEAK OUT AGAINST U.S. POLICY. HOWEVER, SINCE HE WAS INVOLVING HIMSELF IN A MOVEMENT WHICH HAD THE AVOWED AIM OF OVERTHROWING A GOVERNMENT WITH WHICH THE U.S. GOVERNMENT MAINTAINS FRIENDLY RELATIONS, THERE WAS NO POSSIBILITY OF HABIB GIVING HIM ANY ADVICE OR MAKING ANY COMMITMENTS TO HIM.

4. PSINAKIS ACKNOWLEDGED THAT HABIB'S ANSWER WAS A PROPER AND CORRECT ONE. HE SAID IT WAS NOT THE ANSWER HE HAD HOPED FOR AND IT LEFT HIM DISAPPOINTED AND DEPRESSED.

5. FULL TEXT OF JANUARY 27 MEMCON POUCHED FEBRUARY 12.

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